
Franklin D. Roosevelt — “The Great Communicator”
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Sacramento, CA - Campaign Address

ADDRESS OF GOVERNOR FRANKLIN D. ROOSEVELT
Sacramento, California
September 22, 1932, about 3.30 P.M.

My friends of Sacramento:

I am exceedingly glad to be here with you in the Capital of this (splendid) great State of California. I have often been (in California) here before, and I greatly admire and respect your State. In the old days, when I was in the Navy Department, I used to come here on my visits to and from the old Island Navy Yard. (Applause)

Many words (of) in praise of California could not approach the sentiment that I can convey to you in a simple statement made many years ago by a great foreign statesman. In speaking of America and the various states of America, he said that there is one state that has within itself all of the elements to make a great nation, and that state is California. (Applause)

We had a wonderful welcome all down the line -- even in the middle of the night. Sometimes this welcome has presented a problem to me, because, when at three o'clock in the morning a crowd gathers round my "stateroom" window, and calls for me to come out, and I open one eye half-way, then it is a great problem to know what to do, especially when the crowd

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This is a transcript made by the White House stenographer from his shorthand notes taken at the time the speech was made. Underlining indicates words extemporaneously added to the previously prepared reading copy text. Words in parentheses are words that were omitted when the speech was delivered, though they appear in the previously prepared reading copy text.

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It had a wonderful welcome all down the line -- even in the middle of the night. Sometimes this welcome has been a problem to me because, when at three o'clock in the morning a crowd gathers round my "retreat," I must, and call for me to come out, and I open the curtains, and as I would prefer to know what he would say when the crowd

says, "If you don't come out we'll vote for Hoover!" (Applause, laughter)

I cannot begin to tell you how I have been impressed and pleased by this trip which I have taken -- all the way. From the East Coast to the West Coast, I find that while the people of (this country) the Nation are suffering the results of (a) this great depression -- perhaps the greatest in history -- still, there is abroad in the land hope, and courage, and a determination that better things are ahead.

I might almost say, in the words of our campaign song, "Happy days are here again", (applause) or at least they will be soon, if I may judge by the reception (I) that we have had along the lines. (And) I want to say that you people here in California have already given me a happy day.

There is another principle that I am stressing wherever I speak, that I know is in line with the fundamental ideas of your State, and that is that in this campaign there is going to be less following of mere Party lines than ever before in history. (Hurrah! Applause)

The people of this country have come to believe that what this country needs is new leadership and that the battle we are waging is a battle for new leaders -- not a mere change of Party; -- not a mere change of the Party emblem; -- not a

mere change of names -- but a change of principle -- a "new deal", my friends! (Applause)

In my acceptance speech, I called upon progressive Americans, regardless of party, to join me in this campaign. I have had remarkable response to this invitation. Prominent members and thousands of the rank and file of the other Party have declared their belief that the principles I stand for are the principles of genuine American progress. I invite them, I welcome them, and I pledge my faith to the principles that have brought us together. I repeat that in no state is this spirit of non-partisanship more pronounced than in the State of California. It is written in your law, your primary and election laws. It dominates your thinking, and I may add, it is the great compelling purpose of at least some of your statesmen.

I am particularly (glad) happy, my friends, to be here in Sacramento today and speak to the townspeople of one who was once a native son of Sacramento -- a man who has done so much to further progressive thought and courageous public action. I refer to (your own Senator Hiram Johnson) a man -- long a warrior in the ranks of true American progress -- your own Senator Hiram Johnson. (Hurrah! Applause)

And I rejoice that he said only yesterday that a

government that thinks (only) merely of a favored few and that forgets the farmers whose homes are being taken away from them, and forgets the toilers whose wages have been (decreased) cut off -- cut down to the danger line -- "is unworthy of the name and unfit to govern."

I believe in this doctrine myself, 100%.

I am glad to come to this great Valley of advanced agriculture.

To the end that the great farming population, not only here but throughout the Nation, may be restored to its former status, I have advocated a number of fundamental measures of relief.

First, I have called for the relief of the farmer from the great burden of taxation through decreasing the cost of local government, State government and Federal government.

I have called for the reorganization of the Department of Agriculture itself to the end that it may serve the people more and cost the people less.

I have called for a planned use of the land, thinking in terms of the country generally, and the coming generation.

I have called for a policy of a new financing of farm mortgages in order to relieve the burden of excessive interest, and the grim threat of foreclosure.

I have called for genuine governmental efforts to devise means by which the farmer may get the benefit of the equivalent of a tariff protection similar to that which industry has. (Hurrah! Prolonged applause)

I have called for (immediate attention to the tariff, that) action on a document that is sometimes called the Smoot-Hawley tariff and sometimes called the Grundy tariff -- a tariff that has done so much to destroy foreign trade by making foreign trade virtually impossible.

And finally, I have called for a consideration of means by which our trade with the Orient, that has so largely been destroyed, may be restored to us.

My friends, to the achievement of all of these things, I pledge you honest, sincere attention. It is the spirit in which these things are approached, my friends, that counts more than anything else.

I do not regard the restoration of the farmers' market as a hopeless task, but I do regard it as hopeless just so long as leadership remains in Washington that has no genuine sympathy for the farmers' case. (Applause)

(Let us join) And so, I ask you, men and women of all parties, to join us in attempting to end this policy of inaction. Let us join tirelessly in the work of advancing America to a better-ordered economic life. (Hurrah! Prolonged applause)